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Quite a Problem

SURGEON GENERAL LUTHER L. TERRY, a moderate smoker himself, might have quite a time finding his panel of "unbiased experts" to study the impact of smoking, air pollution and auto exhaust on health.

Let's see.

This "unbiased panel" would seem to eliminate heavy smokers and even non-smokers; each might be biased, for opposite reasons. Might even argue that a man who limits himself to one cigar after dinner—and would scream if he didn't have it—might be prejudiced.

People who drive one block to the store instead of walking might be biased; after all, how could they live without their car (or cars)—exhaust pollution or not. Then again, people who would rather walk than drive (if there are any such animals left) might be prejudiced the other way.

Same goes for people who live near a factory or mill which sends up smoke; or people who live 'way out in the country and never see a smokestack belch black soot.

Surely stockholders, executives and possibly employees of tobacco, auto and steel companies don't qualify.

But government determination being what it is, Dr. Terry sooner or later will come up with his experts.

"But we still think he's got a tough job finding them.

TIMES
Scranton, Pennsylvania
August 6, 1962

Smoking-Cancer Study

For the first time the federal government is to sponsor a study designed to resolve the long-disputed question as to whether there is a relationship between smoking and the incidence of lung cancer. The U.S. Public Health Service for several years has taken the stand that smoking is a principal cause of the increase in this type of the disease. The tobacco industry has persistently argued that there is no concrete evidence to justify this conclusion.

President Kennedy, acting upon the advice of the Health Service, has authorized the study. Dr. Luther L. Terry, U.S. Surgeon General, is to appoint, within the next few weeks, a 12-member committee to undertake it. While the association of smoking with cancer will be the primary issue, the panel will also consider the impact of air pollution, automobile exhaust fumes and other related factors on health.

Tobacco is big business in the United States—the industry does an annual business of \$8 billion—and the findings of the government-sponsored study group could conceivably have a severe impact on the national economy. Within recent months, the governments in Great Britain and Italy have launched campaigns against smoking on the basis of the belief that it is a contributing cause of lung cancer. The U.S. study to start this Fall is expected to require at least a year before any findings are made. The issue poses such broad consequences that the panel should be given all the time that is needed to make an honest, objective judgment.

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